



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/820,679	04/08/2004	Ian Hunter	65689CPDV(43382)	8534
21874	7590	05/05/2009	EXAMINER	
EDWARDS ANGELL PALMER & DODGE LLP			SODERQUIST, ARLEN	
P.O. BOX 55874			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
BOSTON, MA 02205			1797	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			05/05/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/820,679	HUNTER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Arlen Soderquist	1797	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 February 2009.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,3-10,12 and 14-16 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,3-10 and 12 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 08 April 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2-9-09.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

1. Newly submitted claims 14-16 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: in claim 14 a negative pressure is applied to the last of the through-hole arrays rather than to the transfer members. Claims 15-16 specify flexible transfer members that are drawn through the array of through holes rather than placed proximate to an outermost through-hole array.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 14-16 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character “128” in figure 11 has been used to designate both an alignment plate and a retraction direction. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

3. Claims 1, 3-10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for a hydrophobic/hydrophilic structure for the plates and the transfer members placed adjacent to the bottom through-hole of the stack, does not reasonably provide enablement for any spacing, any through-hole array structure and addition of the fluid from the top of the stack or a stack arranged with the registration of through-holes in a side to side configuration. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. Applicant has pointed to paragraph [0099] in the published application which describes the embodiment shown in figure 11. The paragraph teaches a spacing which is taught as non-limiting however the minimum and maximum spacing that the invention will produce a

fluidic bridge that is broken when the fluid pressure is release is not taught nor apparently recognized. The following is a portion of paragraph [0099] with added emphasis.

“After the through-hole is filled, a liquid drop can begin to grow in the space between the two plates. When the drop reaches a size that it contacts the through-hole in the plate above it, surface tension draws some fluid into the through-hole. Once the fluidic bridge is established, liquid can flow into the through-hole, driven by the constant pressure applied to the opposite end of the tubing array. With no applied pressure, the drop retreats into the through-hole, the fluidic bridge between each plate is broken, and the separation of array plates after filling can be facilitated (i.e., because there is generally no surface tension that needs to be overcome). Successive filled plates 10 are then withdrawn, and the tube array may be retracted in direction 128. Each vertically registered set of through-holes may thus act as a channel for fluid flow. The hydrophobic coatings on the exterior surface of the arrays prevent liquid from flowing into adjacent holes.”

From this portion of paragraph [0099] it is clear that the fluidic bridge is between the through-hole being filled and the through-hole in the plate above it in order for the fluidic bridge to be broken when fluid pressure is released. It is also clear that the hydrophobic/hydrophilic structure of the plate is required for the process to succeed.

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-10 and 12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

5. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The additionally cited prior art are directed to dry reagents that are dissolvable/resuspendable.

7. Relative to the IDS, those references that have been lined through have a publication date that removes them from being a reference or constitute a duplicate citation.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Arlen Soderquist whose telephone number is (571)272-1265. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and Alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vickie Kim can be reached on (571) 272-0579. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Arlen Soderquist/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797